

SC407787

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned by a large organisation. It is linked to a specialist school operated by the same organisation, which some of the young people attend. The home is registered to care for up to six children who have social and/or emotional difficulties. Young people can access therapy services at the school site. The home is located in an urban area within easy reach of all local amenities and services.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 8 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Young people make good progress. Monitoring systems record their achievements, which are rewarded.
- Staff support young people's interests outside the home, and encourage them to learn independence skills.
- Young people make good academic progress, supported by staff who value their education.
- Safeguarding concerns are investigated thoroughly and safety measures agreed to ensure young people's safety.
- The staff and manager work closely with all stakeholders, especially parents and education staff. This leads to consistency and a strong sense of collaboration.

The children's home's areas for development

- Management oversight was compromised during senior staff's absence and staff shortages. Behaviour strategies to reduce bullying were not implemented immediately. Analysis and management responses regarding some incidents were weak.
- Records of physical interventions have not included discussions with staff and young people.
- Ofsted have not been notified of all incidents within the expected timescales.
- Missing-from-home records are not consistent. Staff cannot consistently demonstrate that they have followed the missing-from-home protocol.
- The manager's supervision has not been regular or in line with the home's supervision policy. Not all staff, including senior staff, have yet attained relevant qualifications.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
-----------------	-----------------	----------------------

08/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/06/2016	Full	Good
27/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
23/09/2015	Full	Good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that – promotes their welfare. (Regulation 13 (1)(b))	31/07/2017
The registered person must ensure that – within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person") – has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(b)(i)(ii) and (c))	31/07/2017
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if – there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(e))	31/07/2017

Recommendations

- Records must be kept detailing all individual incidents when children go missing. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 9.31, page 45). In particular this should include evidencing steps taken to search for the young person and detailed logs of attempts to contact them, and when the social worker and parents were informed.
- All managers working in a children's home must have the qualification in regulation 28(2) within the relevant timescales listed in regulation 28(3). All staff in a care role, including external agency or bank staff, must have the qualification in regulation 32(4) within the relevant timescale listed in regulation 32(5). The registered person may extend the period if the member of staff hasn't worked in the role for a prolonged period. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations

including the quality standards', paragraph 10.12, page 53)

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive regular supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 13.2, page 61)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people living here have experienced a short period of instability. Relationships between some of the young people became problematic and staff struggled to calm matters. The registered manager made the decision to end a young person's placement because the home could no longer meet his needs or manage his behaviour. No further admissions are planned until the home is more settled and young people feel secure. This indicates thoughtful management planning.

Staff supported the young person to manage the move from the home. His parent reported that 'staff handled the end of the placement sensitively'. The registered manager ensured that additional staffing was in place during the young person's transition. This was effective in ensuring a positive ending.

Young people continue to make measurable progress. Staff identify targets with the young people and review these weekly. An incentive system motivates the young people and demonstrates that staff recognise and celebrate young people's achievements. The young people learn new skills and manage social relationships better because of staff support. For example, one young person struggled to make new friends when attending a social club; staff attended with him and role modelled positive interactions to help him to learn how to interact with his peers. Another young person can now cook meals and is developing independent skills in preparation for when he moves from the home.

The staff support the young people's educational attendance. They help young people to meet the targets set through their education, health and care plans and by following these diligently in the home environment. This consistent approach and close communication with the school and college ensure that young people make good academic progress. As a result, one young person has made such improvement that education staff are reviewing his diagnosis of learning disability. Another young person is able to travel to and from college independently and has gained a place in a college in his local area in advance of a move back home.

The staff encourage young people to follow their individual interests and to take advantage of social opportunities. They support young people to attend community groups such as scout groups, a local rugby team and the gym. The staff ensure that

young people retain social links with their home communities. They travel a long distance with one young person to his home area to ensure that he can continue to attend the local youth club; as a result, he is less isolated during school holidays.

The young people benefit from having their health needs met to a good standard. Staff attend appointments if parents or carers are unable to accompany young people. The young people are encouraged to make good use of the therapy that is available at the school. Good links between the therapist and the residential staff exist. Consultations with therapists help staff to reflect on young people's behaviour and develop strategies to manage their behaviour more effectively.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Young people are kept safe by a staff team that demonstrates a good knowledge of safeguarding. The registered manager immediately reports any concerns to the local authority. The registered manager liaises with professionals to ensure that matters are fully investigated. The registered manager completed internal investigations after allegations were made by a young person and ensured that safety measures were in place. The registered manager notifies Ofsted of serious incidents when they occur. However, during his absence, Ofsted was not notified of one incident within the expected timescales.

Staff have recently undertaken refresher training in child protection, including child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Staff teach the young people how to use electronic /internet-based devices safely. Young people attend workshops regarding 'stranger danger' and keeping themselves safe. The young people sign agreements regarding their use of personal equipment to ensure that they agree to the rules and restrictions in place.

Behaviour management strategies are implemented. The staff are trained in de-escalation techniques to defuse situations. The staff record in detail the behaviour leading up to the need for a physical intervention, the methods used and the actions taken. However, the manager does not consistently record staff's and young people's discussions following the interventions. This compromises his ability to address any learning points with the staff and the young people at the time of the incident. This shortfall is being addressed and there is some recent evidence of good feedback.

The young people enjoy exploring the local area. The staff use the location risk assessment to educate the young people regarding any associated dangers. The registered manager documents the risks in relation to other children's homes in the area. Staff ensure that young people from the sister home spend safe, positive time together.

Young people rarely going missing from the home. Since the last inspection, this has occurred twice. Staff responded effectively in one incident. They followed the home's protocol and procedure, and welcomed the young people home. However, recording of the second incident was brief; the recordings do not demonstrate whether the staff followed the missing-from-home protocol. This means that the manager was unable to

analyse the young person's motives for running away and evaluate the actions taken to safeguard the young person.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager is an experienced manager who has the necessary qualification to lead the home. He has obtained the level 5 qualification in leadership and management and has been in post for three years. A member of staff describes him as a 'passionate manager'. Staff report that the team 'Work together to keep the young people safe'.

The registered manager has addressed most of the issues raised at the last inspection; however, there was a delay in devising behaviour management strategies. This compromised staff's ability to manage these risks consistently during this period. The registered manager has not updated the policy and procedures relating to bullying within the home. The organisation's policy for managing bullying is, therefore, not clear to staff.

Staff have not had consistent, strong leadership at times when there has been a shortage of senior staff. At these times, staff have relied on on-call managers, who gave inconsistent responses. Staff have not had the benefit of senior staff working alongside them. The registered manager has covered shifts where there have been staff shortages or difficulties within the home; this has meant that he has not been able to provide adequate management oversight and analysis of some incidents.

Key-work sessions, direct work and house meetings are effective when they take place. However, during the unsettled period, these meetings did not taken place regularly. This is a missed opportunity to record formal discussions with young people and ensure they have the chance to share their concerns.

Comprehensive risk assessments are updated and inform staff about the measures to take to protect young people from harm. Staff adhere to the care plans to reduce the identified risks.

Supervisions are regular, and focus on each young person and the ways in which their behaviour may affect staff. Staff feel safe to discuss personal issues that affect them, as well as any concerns that they may have about work practice. However, the registered manager has not had regular supervision. This has meant that he has not been enabled to reflect on his practice and the continual development of the service.

Permanent staff are well trained and experienced, with the skills to look after the young people. However, not all staff have the level 3 diploma in residential childcare. A senior member of staff has yet to complete this qualification. This is being addressed and he is on course to achieve this qualification.

There are good professional relationships between the home and partner agencies. These relationships are effective in supporting young people. The registered manager

and staff work closely together with the local authority, the education provision and parents. A social worker was positive about a young person's care, and said, 'He is now able to make plans for the future.' A parent said, 'I am happy with the staff and what they have done for my son.' Another parent said, 'Communication with staff is very good.'

The registered manager is aware of the areas that need to develop within the service. He makes good use of external monitoring processes, which identify areas that need improving. He has devised an action plan to address shortfalls. He is improving the service for the benefit of the young people.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC407787

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Registered provider address: Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London, W14 8UD

Responsible individual: Clive Coombs

Registered manager: Ryan Thirlwell

Inspector

Suzy Lemmy: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017